



STATE OF NEW JERSEY

Board of Public Utilities
Two Gateway Center
Newark, New Jersey 07102

Customer Relations

Morteza Abdollah,

Petitioner,

V.

Public Service Electric and
Gas Company,

Respondent.

ORDER ADOPTING INITIAL DECISION

BPU Docket No. GC00120997U
OAL Docket No. PUC 847-01

(SERVICE LIST ATTACHED)

BY THE BOARD:

On December 20, 2000, Morteza Abdollah (Petitioner) filed a petition with the Board of Public Utilities (Board) with respect to a billing dispute with Public Service Electric and Gas Company (Respondent). The Petitioner complained that he was overcharged in the amount of \$1,450.00 due to a defective meter. On January 26, 2001, the Board received the Respondent's answer in which it denied the allegation that the Petitioner was overcharged. The respondent also averred that the meter in question was tested and was found to be registering within the limits prescribed by the Board.

On March 14, 2001, the Board transmitted this matter to the Office of Administrative Law (OAL) for determination and initial disposition as a contested case pursuant to N.J.S.A. 52:14B-1 et seq. and N.J.S.A. 52:14F-1 et seq. The matter was assigned to Administrative Law Judge (ALJ) Joseph Lavery.

During the pendency of this matter at the OAL, the parties engaged in negotiations and reached a settlement in accordance with the provisions contained within a letter dated March 13, 2002. The letter was submitted to the ALJ for review. On March 21, 2002, ALJ Lavery filed his Initial Decision with the Board which recommended that the settlement be approved. The ALJ found the letter to be voluntary, consistent with the law and fully dispositive of all issues in controversy. The ALJ therefore concluded that the settlement letter met the requirements of N.J.A.C. 1:1-19.1.

The settlement provides for cancellation of \$1,450.00, the total amount in dispute. The settlement also provides for a refund of Petitioner's security deposit in the amount of \$800.00 plus interest.

After review, the Board FINDS that the terms of the settlement are fair and reasonable. Therefore, the Board HEREBY ADOPTS the Initial Decision and settlement in their entirety, incorporating the terms thereof into this final decision as if fully set forth at length herein.

DATED 5/6/02:

BOARD OF PUBLIC UTILITIES
BY:

SIGNED
JEANNE M. FOX
PRESIDENT

SIGNED
FREDERICK F. BUTLER
COMMISSIONER

SIGNED
CAROL J. MURPHY
COMMISSIONER

SIGNED
CONNIE O. HUGHES
COMMISSIONER

ATTEST:

SIGNED
KRISTI IZZO
SECRETARY

BPU Dkt. No. GC00120997U
OAL Dkt. No. PUC847-01

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